

# Bard College Conservatory of Music

## Degree Recital

**Teryn Kuzma, *soprano and bandurist***

**Neilson Chen, *piano***

**Sunday, April 23rd at 7:00 PM**

**László Z. Bitó '60 Conservatory Building**

Річенько Рідная-Song About War

Odosia Plytka-Sorokhan (1921-2017)  
arr. by Maria Sonevytsky (b. 1981)

Montana Smith, *soprano*  
Grace Molinaro, *cello*

From *These Flowers: A Song Cycle for Soprano and String Quartet* (1994)

Mark Mitchell (b. 1960)

2. Now that War Like Winter Falls

Isabel Chin Garita, *violin*  
Klára Zaykova, *violin*  
Jessica Ward, *viola*  
Grace Molinaro, *cello*

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Secret (2018)

B.E Boykin (b. 1989)

Penelope (2014)

Cecilia Livingston (b. 1984)

From *Where There's a Wall* (2018)

Ian Cusson (b. 1981)

4. Where There's a Wall

From *Six songs op.103*

Louis Spohr (1784-1859)

3. Sehnsucht

5. Das Heimliche Lied

Miles Wazni, *clarinet*

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From *And All the Days Were Purple* (2017)

Alex Weiser (b. 1989)

5. בעגקשאַפּט (Longing)

From *in stitches* (2021)

Sarah Marze (b. 2001)

Mending

### INTERMISSION

\*The Fountain (2023)

Michael Melnik (b. 1997)

Grace Molinaro, *cello*

\*Вона-She Is (2023)

Maksym Mahlay (b. 1998)

Claire Lee, *conductor*  
Montana Smith, *soprano*  
Maksym Mahlay, *bandura*  
Isabel Chin Garita, *violin 1*  
Klára Zaykova, *violin 2*  
Jessica Ward, *viola*  
Grace Molinaro, *cello*

From *Kantes del Verdgel de Granados*-Songs from the Pomegranate Garden (2004)  
5. Ven mos amaremos

Ofer Ben-Amots (b. 1955)

I Would Live in Your Love (2012)

Rachel Devore Fogarty (b. 1980)

Воля-Freedom (2022)

Maryna Krut (b. 1996)

\*Indicates Commission and Premiere

## **Performer Biographies**

Ukrainian-American soprano **Teryn Kuzma** is a versatile performer of classical, contemporary, musical theater, and folk repertoires. She has a deep passion for performing folk repertoire, Eastern European opera, and contemporary music. Most recently, she workshopped the lead role in Layale Chaker's new opera, *Ruinous Gods*, which will premiere next summer at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. This summer, she will sing with the Bard SummerScape Chorus in a new production of *Henry VII* by Camille Saint-Saëns, under the direction of Maestros James Bagwell and Leon Botstein. At Bard, she sang the role of "Celia" in *Iolanthe* with the Bard Graduate Vocal Arts Program (VAP), and won first place in MIOpera's International Vocal Competition in their University Division. In 2022, she joined the Lincoln Crossroads Music Festival artists roster as a singer and bandurist with her sister (Alina Kuzma of Ukrainian folk band "Korinya") and uncle, esteemed bandurist Julian Kytasty.

Her performance credits include the title role of "Vixen" in Leoš Janáček's opera, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and singing *Op. 22, Seven Songs for Soprano and Cymbalom* in the Bard György Kurtág Festival. Since the escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian War in February of 2022, she has taken part in over a dozen benefit concerts for humanitarian aid, in addition to organizing and performing in "Bard Musicians in Support of Ukraine", a student-led concert which raised over \$4,000 in aid for the Help Us Help Charity.

Over the past five years, Teryn has performed as a featured artist with The Ohio Light Opera, Hartford Opera Theater, UConn Opera Theater, Toronto Summer Music Festival, Berkshire Opera Festival, and the Ukrainian Art Song Project in Toronto.

In addition to her emerging singing career, Teryn is also devoted to maintaining the art of the bandura and Ukrainian music. In these solo recitals and special performances, she brings together the unique beauty of bandura with her voice.

Originally from Connecticut, she began studying voice at the Hartt School of Music. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance from the University of Connecticut and is currently pursuing her Masters in the Bard Graduate VAP. There, she studies with esteemed faculty members Lucy Fitz Gibbon, Kayo Iwama, and Stephanie Blythe. After Bard, Teryn is excited to move to New York City in August to pursue further musical endeavors. For more information and upcoming events, visit [www.terynkuzma.com](http://www.terynkuzma.com)

**Dr. Po Hsun (Neilson) Chen** a native of Taiwan is a highly sought-after recitalist and collaborative pianist whose dazzling technique and thoughtful interpretations have been praised by the L.A. Times as "stunning." A doctoral graduate of Arizona State University, Dr. Chen also holds two Master of Music degrees from Taipei University of the Arts and University of Texas at Austin. Over the course of his career, Neilson has been the recipient of many prestigious honors and awards, including winning the inaugural duo competition at Music Academy of the West in 2019. As an active recitalist, chamber music artist and collaborative pianist, Neilson has performed extensively throughout the United States and having given performance in Canada, Germany, Luxemburg, France, Ireland, Japan, South Korea. Highlights include performing at the National Concert Hall in Taiwan in conjunction with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and a performance of Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio in A minor, Op.50, "In Memory of a Great Artist" on the Tempe Center for the Arts' concert series Performance with a View. Besides these accomplishments, Neilson is highly active in his community and passionate about promoting new works by a new generation of composers. Dr. Chen is currently serving as a Collaborative Pianist at Bard College Conservatory of Music and Collaborative Piano Artist in Residence at Meadowmount School of Music. More info can be found at [www.neilsonchenpianist.com](http://www.neilsonchenpianist.com).

**Grace Molinaro** is in her fourth year at Bard College and Conservatory, majoring in cello performance and Middle Eastern Studies (with Arabic). At Bard, she has studied with both Peter Wiley and Raman Ramakrishnan. She hails from the Washington, D.C. area, where she was taught by members of the military bands, and is a member of the Ictus Quartet from Arlington, VA. Grace has participated in a variety of chamber and orchestral opportunities at Bard, including premieres of new works by Bard and Hong Kong-based composers. In Fall 2019, she won the Bard Music Program Concerto Competition, and in Spring 2021, she performed the first movement of Shostakovich Cello Concerto no. 1 with the Bard College and Community Orchestra. Grace has organized two benefit concerts at Bard, one for the Afghan-led project Arezo and one for earthquake relief in Turkey and Syria. She also studied jazz cello with Akua Dixon, and while abroad in Cairo in Fall 2022, she studied Arabic cello with Alaa Abdsalam. In August 2022, she spent two weeks coaching young cellists in Cali, Colombia as part of the Cuerdas Para Cali project. She is always grateful for opportunities to further expand her musical horizons.

Soprano **Montana Smith** is a young artist with a mission to cultivate community through song. Her repertoire within the classical genre spans from antiquity to the present day, with her focus in each context being on generous and inclusive communication. In the past year, her collaboration with the Kytasty-Kuzma's and newfound connection to the Ukrainian diaspora has led to opportunities in teaching, conducting, and performing in Ukrainian music tradition; this has opened up an entirely new world of music making to Montana, and has made an indelible mark on her life— both personal and musical. Currently based in the Hudson Valley, Miss Smith is finishing her final year of graduate studies in the Bard College Conservatory of Music Vocal Arts Program under the tutelage of Edith Bers, while working closely with faculty Kayo Iwama, Erika Switzer, and mezzo-soprano Stephanie Blythe. Her upcoming performances at the Bard Conservatory include her own graduate recital on May 5th, and as soloist for the Pergolesi *Stabat Mater* on May 19th.

Conductor **Claire Lee** earned their Bachelor's in Vocal Performance from DePauw University and is currently studying conducting under the tutelage of James Bagwell. While in Indiana, they've held a number of performing/directing/teaching positions. They serve as the director of Resonance Treble Ensemble, a chamber vocal ensemble based in Indianapolis and they've sung a number of operatic roles including Pandolfe in *Cendrillon* and Bartolo in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. In addition to these obligations, they've served as a church musician at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis. Currently, they enjoy singing and conducting at the Church of the Messiah in Rhinebeck.

**Isabel Chin Garita** is currently pursuing a dual degree in psychology and violin performance with Professors Adele Anthony and Gil Shaham at Bard College and Conservatory. Her previous instruction has been with Magdalena Richter and Jin Kyung-Joen at Project STEP (String Training Education Program), Project BEAM (Bridge to Equity and Achievement in Music), and the New England Conservatory Preparatory School. Chin Garita also enjoys chamber music and has performed as the Chin Duo with her brother on *From The Top*, a live broadcast radio station. During previous summers, she has attended the Aspen Music Festival and School and Bowdoin International Music Festival.

**Jessica Ward** is from Maryland and is in her second year at Bard where she studies viola with Brian Hong and pursues a second degree in architecture. Jessica has been playing the viola for fifteen years and has enjoyed playing chamber music since starting the instrument. She has also partnered with international music festivals during orchestra tours to Chile in 2016 and Italy in 2018. Jessica has had the privilege of studying viola privately with Tsuna Sakamoto, Jennifer Mondie, and Molly Carr. In her free time, Jessica loves listening to music, creating art, and hanging out with her friends.

**Klára Zaykova** is a Czech student of Bard College, currently double-majoring in philosophy and violin performance with Daniel Phillips. Throughout the years, she has won top prizes at international and regional competitions such as Kocian Violin Competition, Premio Clivis, Zlatý Oříšek, Nová Paka, and more. In 2021, she was chosen for a masterclass with Gil Shaham, and the same year, she also played under the baton of Semyon Bychkov with the Czech Student Philharmonic. This year, Klára was chosen as the concertmaster of the Bard Conservatory Orchestra. Throughout the years, she has performed in countries like England, Italy, Austria, Germany and more.

**Maksym Mahlay** (Cleveland, OH) is a Cleveland-born Ukrainian musician, teacher, composer and lecturer. He is graduating as a double major in Piano Performance and Music Composition at the College-Conservatory of Music, where he will be pursuing his Masters in Harpsichord and Composition. In addition to school studies, Maksym has given concerts and ethnomusicological lectures nationwide, with the current March-April lecture tour spanning seven universities across the USA. An alumni of a plethora of bandura camps such as the Bandura@Bobriwka Workshop in Connecticut and Kobzars'ka Sich Bandura and Vocal Program in Pennsylvania, Maksym has since been involved at teaching numerous bandura camps, including KS, Cleveland Bandura Workshop, Detroit Bandura Workshop, and CYM Bandura Seminar.

**Miles Wazni** is a clarinetist from New Haven, Connecticut and is currently a junior at Bard College Conservatory of Music. While growing up in New Haven, Miles attended the Morse Summer Academy at the Yale School of Music for 4 consecutive years, where he studied with both YSM graduate students and YSM faculty, and held multiple principal positions in a variety of ensembles. More recently, Miles attended the Young Artist Program at The Curtis Institute of Music, and studied with faculty from Curtis and The Philadelphia Orchestra. Miles was a member of the New Haven Youth Orchestra, as well as a variety of chamber groups with other local high school musicians. Miles also won the New Haven Concerto competition, and performed as a featured soloist with the New Haven Chamber Orchestra. He also was a finalist in the Bard Conservatory Concerto Competition during his first year at Bard. While in New Haven, Miles studied with clarinetist Sam Boutris, and now studies with Pascual Martínez-Forteza of the New York Philharmonic and David Krakauer.